

# *The Magic Flute*

*A comic opera fragment*

*Day. A forest. A rocky grotto where a portal has been hewn.  
From the forest.*

*Enter: Monostatos and Moors.*

MONOSTATOS

O comrades, sing praises,  
rejoice in our gain!  
We've come to our Goddess  
in triumph again.

CHORUS

Success has been with us,  
good luck helped us win!  
We've come to our Goddess  
in triumph again.

MONOSTATOS

We did it sly-handed,  
we wormed ourselves in;  
of what she's commanded,  
the first part is done.

CHORUS

We did it sly-handed,  
we wormed ourselves in;  
and what she's commanded  
soon will be done.

MONOSTATOS

O Goddess! sealed from every eye  
in the vaults, who dwells all alone,  
soon in the loftiest air of sky,

## *The Magic Flute*

defying the light upon your throne,  
O hear out your friend! in the future, your groom!  
What hinders you, omnipresent might,  
what holds you back, O Queen of the Night!  
from instantly spreading your shadows of gloom?

*Thunderclap. Monostatos and Moors fall to the ground. Darkness. Clouds emerge from the portal and envelop it.*

### THE QUEEN

Who calls me out?  
Who tempts me with speech?  
Who hazards this stillness with voices to breach?  
I hear nothing—Ha! alone I must be!  
The world should indeed be silent 'bout me!

*The clouds overshadow the theater and envelop Monostatos and the Moors, who can still be seen.*

Cloud up, you billows,  
and cover the earth,  
that gloominess gain  
a more sinister girth!  
Terror and hailing,  
Sorrow and wailing  
faintly recede; let fright  
close the hymn to the night  
with silence and death.

### MONOSTATOS AND CHORUS

Before your throne here,  
stationed to serve, are—

### QUEEN

Do you, disciples, appear  
before me once more?

### MONSTATOS

Yes, your disciple,  
my love, it's he.

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QUEEN

Am I found out?

CHORUS

Goddess, it's thee!

QUEEN

Spiral, you firebolts,  
rage ceaselessly, thunder,  
shatter the smothering  
nighttime asunder.

Comets, stream onward  
and down through the skies!

Wandering stars,  
ken the stars in your eyes.  
Light up the loftily  
satisfied rage.

MONSTATOS AND CHORUS

Look! comets,  
they fall through the skies.

Wandering stars  
ken the stars in their eyes,  
and from the poles  
arises the blaze.

*The Queen stands in all her glory as a light from the north shines from center stage. Comets, St. Elmo's Fire, and balls of light crisscross in the clouds. The form, color, and secret symmetry of all this must have a frightening but agreeable effect.*

MONOSTATOS

Before the world in festive light,  
splendidly you'll soon appear.

In the solar realm, you wield your might.  
Pamina and Tamino still shed their tears;  
their highest bliss interred in the night.

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QUEEN

Their newborn son, is he in my hands?

MONOSTATOS

Not yet, but soon we'll meet your demands;  
I read the signs in the stars' savage fight.

QUEEN

Not yet in my hands? What did you, then?

MONOSTATOS

O Goddess, have mercy upon your men!  
We bade farewell to the king in lament.  
Now you can loathe her to your heart's content.  
Hark! Climbing his throne, here comes the morn  
and hope approaches, sweet,  
who promised connubial trust a treat,  
the long-entreated first son born.  
The maidens were with full festoons,  
the flower'd wreathes did swell;  
in pageant sacrifice, and damsels danced, in revel.  
Their new costumes pleased them all the more.  
While the women were roused with eagerness keen  
as matrons to bear in mind the queen,  
invisibly, we wormed across the palace floor.  
We heard, "A son, a son!" and opened, as they screamed,  
the gold sarcophagus that was our care.  
The darkness poured out, shrouding everyone there;  
each one tripped and shook and dreamed.  
The mother had yet her boy to behold,  
the father had yet his son to admire,  
but I grabbed him quickly, with a hand of fire  
and shut him at once in that casket of gold.  
And ever darker grows the night  
when we see with the tiger's eye.  
But oh, I don't know what cruel might  
resists us with its power.  
The gold casket burdens us more—

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CHORUS

Grows heavier in our hands.

MONOSTATOS

Grows heavier than ever before.

We can't finish the work she demands.

CHORUS

It pulls us down to the floor.

MONOSTATOS

It's firmly fixed there, we can't lift it away.

Sarastro's magic is blocking its way.

CHORUS

We fear the spell ourselves and so must flee.

QUEEN

You cowards, is that how you act?

My rage—

CHORUS

Your rage, O Queen, you must withhold!

MONOSTATOS

With sapience and skill so bold,

I press your seal to the grave of gold

and shut the lad forever in your care,

which no one can undo.

Then you'll have him in your snare

and the stiff little dear will belong to you.

His form lies there, dead, and frightens the day.

With anthems forbidding, we saunter away.

CHORUS

Should the mother ever see,

should she ever see the son,

then tear his fate away,

tear his fate away at once.

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Should the father ever see,  
should he ever see the son,  
then tear his fate away,  
tear his fate away at once.

### MONOSTATOS

In the distance, then, I did discern  
the casket, light as feathers.  
They're bringing him to a fraternal order  
where he'll shut himself in to teach wisdom and learn.  
With newfound craft and strength, your servant perseveres.  
Even in the holy spheres,  
your hate and curses hold their sway.  
If the consorts see themselves, let madness entrance,  
and the sight of their child be a sight that enchants,  
and forever tears that child away.

### QUEEN, MONOSTATOS, AND CHORUS

If the parents ever see,  
if they catch themselves in sight,  
grab their souls at once,  
O madness and fright.

If the parents ever see,  
if they ever see the son,  
tear their fate away,  
tear their fate away at once.

*Women enter carrying a golden frame which supports the golden sarcophagus. An exquisite carpet is suspended from the frame. Other women carry an ornate canopy over the sarcophagus.*

### CHORUS OF WOMEN

We wander on in quiet fear,  
and grieve at every lust;  
a child is there, a son is here,  
and worries crowd the breast.

### A LADY

So wander forth, do not stand still.

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This is what the wise men will.  
Have faith in them and blindly obey;  
the child shall live as long as you stray.

### CHORUS

O woeful, captivated boy,  
what shall become of you.  
Your mother's not allowed her joy,  
your father's been denied it, too.

### A LADY

And the consorts split painfully asunder.  
And may take no comfort, heart in heart.  
He wanders off; she cries there, left apart;  
Sarastro still lulls the house to slumber.

### CHORUS

O slumber gently, slumber sweet,  
you long awaited son!  
Leave this crypt, and with a leap  
ascend your father's throne.

### A LADY

It's time to roam, here comes the King  
You can hear wailing in the empty room ring;  
by now he's sensed the gloom round his throne,  
yet does not see the crypt of his precious son.

*They cross the stage*

### TAMINO

When the boy is softly smiling  
at the father from his bassinet,  
and the morning breeze is wiling  
all around his charming silhouette,  
yes! for this gift, he gives thanks to fate.  
This good means more than all his estate.  
And he lives, and loved shall be  
the one that gives love back to me.

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WOMEN (*in the distance*)

O he lives and loved shall be  
the one that gives love back to thee.

TAMINO

Dawn is breaking, day is nigh  
in Aurora's purple light.  
Oh! Dreadful thunder claps the sky  
and veils the scene of joy with night.  
And what these fates of mine revealed,  
a golden grave too soon concealed.

WOMEN (*in the distance*)

Oh, what these fates of ours revealed,  
a golden grave too soon concealed.

TAMINO

I hear the bearers of my sweet draw nigh.  
Come closer! Let's unite and sigh.  
O say! How does Pamina bear the news?

A LADY

She's lost without the gods' fine joys.  
She sighs for you and grieves for the boy.

TAMINO

O tell me, does my prisoned bliss still breathe?  
Does he move yet in his magic place?  
Give me hope to see my treasure's face!  
Oh give my baby back to me!

LADIES

We listen as we wander  
with feelings woebegotten.  
His restless moves we ponder—  
too strange to be forgotten.  
We feel inside what's yearning,  
we see the casket churning.  
We hearken but can say no more

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of goodly omens seen before.  
At night when every sound has died,  
we hear the babbling child inside.

### TAMINO

Guard him, you gods, with miraculous care!  
Revive him with drink, feed him your fare!  
And demonstrate your trust to me,  
always bestir yourselves to act.  
Sarastro's word will set us free  
and consecrate its holy pact.

Listen to the smallest murmur  
and inform the worried father  
of the slightest little gest.

### TAMINO AND CHORUS

And delivered from hazard's way,  
at the mother's breast he'll pray.  
Soon an angel, there he'll rest.

*Woods and rocks. A hut in the background. A golden waterfall on one side, a flock of birds on the other.*

*PAPAGENO and PAPAGENA sit on opposite sides of the stage with backs turned toward one another.*

SHE (*stands up and goes to him*)  
What is it then, my dearest little man?

HE (*sitting*)  
I'm vexed and nasty, let me be!

SHE  
Aren't I your dearest little hen?  
Don't you want to be with me?

HE  
I'm vexed and nasty, vexed and nasty!

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SHE

He's vexed and nasty, vexed and nasty!

BOTH

The whole wide world just isn't fair.

SHE (*sits off to the side*)

HE (*stands up and goes to her*)

What is it then, dear wife, my love?

SHE

I'm vexed and nasty, don't come near!

HE

Aren't you still my sweet dear dove?

Will our love just disappear?

SHE

I'm vexed and nasty, vexed and nasty!

HE (*distancing himself*)

I'm vexed and nasty, vexed and nasty!

BOTH

What happened to our love so dear?

HE My child! my child! let's come to our senses just a bit.  
Aren't we being really ungrateful toward our benefactors  
by carrying on this way?

SHE Indeed! I agree, and yet it can't be helped.

HE Why then aren't we satisfied?

SHE Because we aren't gay.

HE Didn't the Prince give us that precious flute as a wedding  
present for luring the tastiest animals to our dinner table?

SHE And didn't you present me with that splendid glockenspiel  
on the second day of our honeymoon. I only need to tap

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it, and all the birds fall into the trap at once. The doves sail perfectly barbequed into our mouths.

HE The jack rabbits jump onto the table fully smoked and garnished. And Sarastro conjured up that bountiful fountain of wine by our cottage—and yet, we're still not satisfied.

SHE (sighing) Yes! and it's no wonder.

HE (sighing) Quite so, no wonder.

SHE We're lacking—

HE Unfortunately, we're lacking—

SHE (crying) We're really so unhappy!

HE (crying) Quite so, so unhappy!

SHE (with increased blubbering) The pretty,

HE (with increased blubbering) pleasing,

SHE charming,

HE little,

SHE Pa-

HE Pa-

SHE Papa-

HE Papa-

SHE Oh, the pain will do me in.

HE I may not live much longer.

SHE I thought they'd be here by now.

HE They're already hopping around.

SHE How pleasing it would be.

HE First a little Papageno.

SHE And then a little Papagena.

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HE Papageno.

SHE Papagena.

HE Now where do you think they could be?

SHE They simply haven't shown up.

HE That's truly a misfortune! Had I only hanged myself when the time was ripe.

SHE If I'd only stayed an old lady!

BOTH Oh, we poor unfortunates!

CHORUS (*behind the scene*)

You good little creatures,  
why do you dismay?  
You comical birdies,  
be happy and gay!

HE

Aha!

SHE

Aha!

BOTH

The boulders are ringing,  
they sing one and all.  
They're ringing  
they're singing  
with forest and hall.

CHORUS

Take care of your business,  
in silence, enjoy,  
the gods are bestowing—  
(pause)

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HE

The Pa?

CHORUS (*as echo*)

The Pa, Pa, Pa.

HE

The Papagenos?

SHE

The Papagenas?

(*pause*)

CHORUS

The gods are presenting  
you parents a boy.

HE

Come, let's pull ourselves in line  
that this melancholia disappear.  
But first, let's drink a glass of wine—

*They go to the fountain and drink.*

BOTH

Now, let's pull ourselves in line.  
Melancholia, disappear!

*He takes the flute and looks around as if he were looking for game.  
She sits in the little portico by the flock of birds and picks up the glockenspiel.*

HE (*playing*)

SHE (*singing*)

O Great spirit of the Light!  
Bring our hunt good luck!

SHE (*plays*) BOTH (*singing*)

Let the troop of colored birds  
descend upon the flock.

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HE (*plays*) SHE (*sings*)  
See! the lions roaming there,  
roaming keeps them fresh.

SHE (*plays*) HE (*sings*)  
But far too brawny for my taste.  
What a gristly flesh!

HE (*plays*) SHE (*sings*)  
Hear the little birdies flap,  
flapping in the nest.

SHE (*plays*) HE (*sings*)  
Keep playing! these little birdies  
taste the very best.  
Hens are hopping in the fields,  
chickens fat and pretty.

HE (*plays*) SHE (*plays and sings*)  
Bunnies jump! Here come the hares!  
Don't stop your little ditty.

*Hares and rabbits appear on the rocks. Lions, bears, and apes also approach, and stand in front of the parrots.*

SHE (*plays*) HE (*sings*)  
Were I only rid of bears!  
and apes, accursed and randy!  
Bears are just so thick and dumb,  
and apes such skinny dandies.

*Parrots can be seen in the trees.*

SHE (*plays and sings*)  
And the parrot troops fly by,  
traveling in migration.  
Brilliant colors fan the sky;  
to eat, though, no temptation.

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HE (*has, in the meantime, trapped the hares and is carrying one on a large ladle*)

See, I've snatched myself a hare,  
lured it from the rabble.

SHE (*has just shut the snare where the fluttering feathers of birds can be seen*)

See, the fattened birdies here  
are tangled in their gaggle.

*She takes out a bird and brings it to him, holding it by the wings.*

BOTH

True, my child, we try to live  
our life from day to day.  
As we wander to our hut,  
let's be cheerful, let's be gay.

CHORUS (*hidden*)

You comical birdies  
be happy and gay.  
Redouble your paces,  
your prayers will be blessed;  
the bungalow's graces  
shall grant you the best.

HE and SHE join in the repetition of this stanza.

Redouble our paces,  
our prayers will be blessed.  
Our bungalow's graces  
shall grant us the best.

TEMPLE

Assembly of the Priests.

CHORUS

A man can always look and choose!  
But does choice bring any gain?  
The clever falter, wise men lose

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and double all their pain.  
Acting proper,  
upright posture,  
are the noble-minded choice.  
Should no selection  
cause dejection,  
chance will also raise its voice.

*Sarastro enters before the end of the song and joins them. When the song fades out, the Speaker enters and walks over to Sarastro.*

**SPEAKER** Our brother stands before the northern gate of our holy shrine. He has completed the year of pilgrimage and wishes to be admitted. He has transferred the special signs which demonstrate his worthiness for re-admission to our circle.

*He presents Sarastro with a round crystal tied by a ribbon.*

**SARASTRO** This mysterious stone is still bright and clear. Had our brother failed in his mission, it would have appeared murky. Lead the returning brother onward!

*Exit: Speaker*

Behind these quiet walls, a man learns to look into himself and explore the deep recesses of his soul. He prepares himself to perceive the voice of the gods. But only the wanderer who has roamed over the wide fields of the earth can learn to recognize the sublime language of nature and the sounds of humankind in need. For this reason, we abide by our rule of sending a pilgrim out into the raw world each year. The lottery decides and the righteous obey.

After I've entrusted my diadem to the worthy Tamino, who will rule in my place with youthful vigor and precocious wisdom, I too, for the first time, will be in the same position as each of you who must reach into the holy vessel and submit to the fate of the pronouncement.

*Enter: Speaker and Pilgrim*

## *The Magic Flute*

PILGRIM      Hail to thee, Father! Hail to you, brothers!

ALL            Hail to you!

SARASTRO     The crystal shows me that you return pure of heart and without blame. Now tell your brothers what you've learned. Add to their wisdom. But first, wait for the appropriate moment when you've entrusted your robe and crystal to the one whom the will of the gods selects for the pilgrimage from our happy society.

*He gives the crystal back to the Pilgrim. Two priests carry a portable altar, which supports a flat, golden vessel. The altar must be high enough so that no one can see into the vessel.*

### CHORUS

SARASTRO     (*unrolling the lottery scroll*) The lottery has fallen to me, and I shall not hesitate a single moment to submit to its command. Indeed, my premonitions have been borne out. The gods want to distance me from your midst in order to test us. The moment the powers of the malevolent forces have become operative, I'll be called away. The shell of the Good will become light in my absence. But hold fast, persevere, don't waver from the steady course, and we'll soon see each other again.

I gave the crown to my minion,  
I gave it to the worthy man.  
But still I keep dominion  
to serve you all the best I can.  
Yet, even that's now torn away;  
I have to leave you all today.  
From this holy shrine, I must depart;  
all my sons, take heart.  
You sons, I bid farewell.  
Guard Wisdom's exalted dell.  
From this sacred Hall and ground,  
I leave, a pilgrim onward bound.

## *The Magic Flute*

*During this aria, Sarastro hands over his robe and high priest's emblems, which are carried off with the golden vessel. In return, he receives the pilgrim's garb, the ribbon attached to the crystal is placed around his neck, and he takes the staff in his hand. During the various parts of the aria, the composer will know how to space the caesuras.*

### CHORUS

Now who rules  
the sacred hall and ground?  
He leaves, a pilgrim onward bound.

*The priests remain standing on both sides of the middle altar.*

### SARASTRO

Life was just a day to me,  
my brothers, there with you.  
So praise the joy around thee,  
submit yourselves supinely,  
then raise yourselves sublimely,  
for God may bid that, too.  
We must be cleaving,  
our exit's imposed.  
O how I am grieving!  
I must stay composed!  
O what a blow!  
(exit)

### CHORUS

You hallowed hallways,  
hear out our sad refrain;  
the brighter days  
no longer do acclaim  
Sarastro's word:  
no instruction's heard  
in solemn locations  
'midst high obligations.  
And verity's  
no longer on earth.

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Its clarity  
cannot disperse.  
Your higher path  
is now in sight,  
but we're engulfed  
by deepest night.

### **A FESTIVE PROCESSION**

*Pamina with her entourage. The casket is carried along with them. In pursuance of an oracle, she dedicates it to the sun. The casket is placed on the altar. Prayer, earthquake. The altar along with the casket sink into the earth. Pamina's despair. The scene is arranged in such a way that the actress can express a meaningful spectrum of emotions with help from the music.*

### **FOREST AND ROCKS. PAPAGENO'S DWELLING.**

*They've discovered big beautiful eggs in the hut. They suspect that special birds might be hidden inside. The poet should be cautious that the amusement in this scene remain within the limits of propriety. Sarastro approaches them. Following a few mystical utterances about natural forces, a lowly rock emerges from the earth. A fire burns in its center. Following Sarastro's command, a comfortable nest is prepared on the rock, the eggs are placed on it and covered with flowers. Sarastro steps back. The eggs begin to swell. They crack open and children tumble out one after another: two boys and a girl. Their first gestures amongst themselves and vis-à-vis their elders should provide an opportunity for poetic and musical jests. Sarastro goes over to them. A few words on education. Then he describes Pamina and Tamino's sad predicament. After the casket has sunk, Pamina searches out her consort. When they catch sight of each other, they fall into a sleep from which they can waken only for the short time required to abandon themselves to despair. Sarastro calls the cheerful family back to the court to lighten its distress with jokes. Papageno in particular is to bring the flute in order to test its healing power. Sarastro, who alone remains behind, scales the mountain during an aria.*

### **ANTECHAMBER IN THE PALACE**

*Two ladies and two gentlemen are walking back and forth.*

*The Magic Flute*

TUTTI

Quiet, that no one cause a commotion.  
Let the singing drift by, dreamy in motion!  
You're troubled, in guarded anxiety,  
should the King fall ill, then so too will we.

THIRD LADY (*coming quickly*)

Would you like to hear the news today,  
can I tell you the latest tale?  
Soon we won't have to weep and wail.  
The mother's been appeased, they say.

THIRD GENTLEMAN (*coming quickly to join them*)

And Papageno, so they say,  
has found the greatest treasure:  
great nuggets of gold and silver  
as big as ostrich eggs.

FIRST TUTTI

Quiet, whatever possessed you to bring  
news while we sing out the pains of the King?  
(*pause*)

But go ahead, speak, make yourself known.

THIRD LADY

Do you want to hear the latest news?—

THIRD GENTLEMAN

And Papageno, so they say—

THIRD LADY

Let me tell you the latest—

THIRD GENTLEMAN

has found the greatest treasure—

FOURTH LADY (*coming quickly to join them*)

Though Sarastro can be found,  
he's disappeared, I've heard.

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He's only gone to gather herbs,  
to heal and make us sound.

FOURTH GENTLEMAN (*coming quickly to join them*)  
The happy hours I sound,  
when all our pains are past;  
for the Prince has now been found,  
and they bring him here at last.

TUTTI (*repeating her story*)

Quiet, why do you want to bring us these rumors?  
Help us sing out the pains of the rulers.  
If only they were true and sound.

*The last four join in, repeating their news to smaller groups.*

PAPAGENO and PAPAGENA (*who are arguing with a guard*)

PAPAGENO No one shall hold me back.

PAPAGENA Nor I.

PAPAGENO I'd rather have rendered service to the King than  
have your whiskers start growing. They make you  
look so grim.

PAPAGENA And I did many favors for the Queen when the  
evil Moor still had her in his clutches. Certainly,  
she'd no longer recognize me, for I was old and  
ugly then. Now, I'm young and pretty.

PAPAGENO Since I'm inside for once, I don't want to go out  
again.

PAPAGENA And since I'm here, I'll stay.

GENTLEMAN See the plumed pair there! As if they'd been sum-  
moned. (*to the guard*) Let them alone! The King  
and Queen will welcome them.

PAPAGENO A thousand thanks, my Lord! We've heard that the  
situation here has taken a turn for the worse.

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GENTLEMAN And we've heard that all goes quite well with you.

PAPAGENO Till things are better, I'll live.

LADY Is it true that you've found the splendid eggs?

PAPAGENO Certainly.

GENTLEMAN Golden ostrich eggs?

PAPAGENO None other.

LADY Are you familiar with the bird that laid them?

PAPAGENO Not yet.

LADY They must be splendid eggs.

PAPAGENO Priceless.

GENTLEMAN How many have you found so far?

PAPAGENO About two to three and a half score.

LADY And all solid?

PAPAGENO Except for the ones which are translucently bright.

GENTLEMAN My dearest Papageno, do you have a portion for me?

PAPAGENO I'd be happy to give you some.

LADY I'd love to have a pair for my natural science cabinet.

PAPAGENO They're at your service.

LADY In that case, I have a dozen friends, all naturalists, who have an especially excellent understanding of noble metals.

PAPAGENO All of them shall be satisfied.

GENTLEMAN You're an excellent chap.

PAPAGENO It's nothing. The eggs are the least of my concerns.

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I'm just as much a merchant now that I'm larger  
as I was when I was smaller.

LADY                   Where is your merchandise?

PAPAGENO            Outside, beyond the castle yard. I had to leave it  
                         there.

LADY                   Of course, because of the toll.

PAPAGENO            They had no idea how much to claim.

GENTLEMAN           They're certainly quite valuable.

PAPAGENO            Priceless.

LADY                   They could be assessed by the egg.

PAPAGENO            Of course; the eggs are the source of value.

GENTLEMAN           (*to the lady*) We must have him as a friend, we  
                         must help them through.

*PAPAGENO and PAPAGENA exit. The others fade back. They carry  
golden bird cages with winged children inside.*

PAPAGENO and PAPAGENA

Of all the pretty wares  
that are traveling to the fairs,  
none could please you more  
than the ones we have in store  
for you from lands across the sea.  
Listen, while we sing to thee,  
and watch the pretty birds!  
These birdies are for sale.

PAPAGENA (*letting one out*)

Take a look at this big bird.  
He's comical and so absurd.  
He lightly hops so cheerfully  
from the bushes, from the tree.  
Soon he'll perch upon that limb

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so now we shall not flatter him.  
O see the cheerful birdy,  
The birdy is for sale.

PAPAGENO (*displaying another*)  
Now watch out for this little tweet;  
he wants to look like he's discreet,  
though he's silly and absurd;  
no better than the bigger bird.  
But, when all is hushed and still,  
he shows the very best of will.  
This silly little birdy,  
this birdy is for sale.

PAPAGENA (*displaying the third*)  
O see the little dove,  
the dearest turtle lovely!  
The females act so gracefully,  
so sensibly and mannerly.  
They love to preen and spruce.  
They love to put your love to use.  
The gentle little birdies  
are sitting here for sale.

### BOTH OF THEM

We wish to sing no praises.  
Our birds stand up to all your mazes.  
They're in love with all things new,  
but to see if they are true,  
don't try your seals and letters.  
All these birdies have their feathers.  
How pleasing are these birdies!  
How thrilling every sale!

*The last lines of each verse are repeated in part by the children, the elders, and the chorus at the composer's discretion.*

LADY

They're certainly attractive enough, but is that all there is?

*The Magic Flute*

PAPAGENA That's everything, and I would've thought it sufficient.

GENTLEMAN Don't you have some of the eggs in the basket? I'd prefer them more than the birds.

PAPAGENO I believe so. However, should one be allowed to speak the truth in this truth-loving society, then one would have to confess that a few boasts have been made.

GENTLEMAN Please speak freely.

PAPAGENO I must confess that this is all the wealth we have.

LADY That'll certainly go far.

GENTLEMAN And the eggs?

PAPAGENO Only the shells remain, for all these have just crawled out of them.

GENTLEMAN And what about the remaining two and a half score?

PAPAGENO That was only a figure of speech.

LADY Then very few would remain for yourselves.

PAPAGENO A pretty little wife, happy children and a good sense of humor, who has more?

GENTLEMAN So when it comes right down to it, you're still nothing more than a buffoon.

PAPAGENO And for that reason, indispensable.

GENTLEMAN Perhaps this amusement could entertain the King and Queen?

LADY Not in the least. It would probably only remind them of unhappy memories.

PAPAGENO And yet Sarastro sent me here for that very reason.

*The Magic Flute*

GENTLEMAN Sarastro? Where did you see Sarastro?

PAPAGENO In our mountains.

GENTLEMAN Was he searching for herbs?

PAPAGENO Not that I know of.

GENTLEMAN But did you see him bending over at times?

PAPAGENO Yes, especially when he was stumbling.

GENTLEMAN Such a holy man does not stumble. He bends over for a reason.

PAPAGENO I'm satisfied with that.

GENTLEMAN He's looking for herbs, perhaps stones, and he's coming here to cure the King and Queen.

PAPAGENO But not today, at least, for he expressly ordered me to go to the palace, to take the renowned magic flute, and to strike up a tune for your Majesties when they awaken. In this way, I can at least ward off their pain for a little while.

LADY One has to try everything.

GENTLEMAN The hour of Awakening approaches. Try your best. Your efforts will not go unthanked or unrewarded.

**PAMINA and TAMINO**

Under a canopy, sleeping in two easy chairs. In order not to disturb the pathetic impression, Papagena and the children exit. Papageno stays partly hidden in the wings where he plays the flute and emerges periodically into view.

**PAMINA** (*waking to the sound of the flute*)

By my side, my loving sleeper  
sweetly sleeping, softly waking  
soon will see the charming sight.

**TAMINO** (*waking*)

## *The Magic Flute*

O, that could make the weeper  
glad and keep his heart from breaking,  
but what plagues my delight?

CHORUS

Play, Papageno, play!  
for his pain returns, despite.

PAMINA (*arising and descending the stairs*)

Animated by my lover  
rousing me to action  
from the gentle shade of slumber  
to this life of rash reaction,  
and to duty, O what delight!

TAMINO (*arising and descending the stairs*)

Let our glancing lover's eyes  
spur us on to deeds of honor,  
and calmly well-advised  
consecrate with lively valor.  
O my rising chest feels light!

*They embrace. Pause, especially the flute.*

CHORUS

Papageno, Papageno,  
play your flute without cessation!  
Keep it up, you must hold out!

PAPAGENO

But let me get some inspiration!  
My breath is almost all played out.

TAMINO and PAMINA (*distancing themselves from one another*)

Do you know what they have taken!  
O how empty is our house!

CHORUS

Play, Papageno, play,

## *The Magic Flute*

Keep it up, you must hold out!  
*Papageno plays.*

TAMINO and PAMINA (*amiably approaching again*)  
Nothing really has been taken.  
Grand and wealthy is our house.

PAPAGENO

Now my breath is all played out!

CHORUS

Keep it up, you must hold out!

PAMINO and TAMINO

O how empty is our house!

*It is entirely up to the composer's discretion to alternate and repeat the transitions from satisfaction and joy to pain and despair occasioned by the foregoing verses.*

*Priests are coming. It's up to the composer to decide whether to introduce only two or the entire chorus. I propose the latter. They give information about the child's whereabouts.*

PRIEST

In the deepest earthly chasms  
here's the water, here, the flames,  
then the watchman without pity,  
then the monster no one tames,  
'twixt the living, 'twixt the dead,  
half unsouled  
with thirsts untold  
dwells the boy.  
Hear his prayers!  
Woe! in thirst he pines away.  
Save your son without delay!

EVERYONE

What a dreadful calm is forming  
all around us suddenly!

## *The Magic Flute*

What a muffled, distant swarming!  
What an agitated storming!  
like the storm upon the sea.  
Ever louder from afar,  
all the elements grow bold.  
What a night unveils the gold  
and airy heaven;  
and then each star  
vanishes from vision.

*Subterranean cavern. The altar and the sarcophagus are in the center as they were when they sank. Armed guards lean against two pillars and seem to be sleeping. Chains running from the pillars are attached to the lions resting at the foot of the altar. All is dark; the translucent sarcophagus illuminates the scene.*

CHORUS (*hidden from view*)

We sentence and we penalize:  
the watchman shall not close his eyes;  
the heavens glow so red.  
The lions can't be resting,  
if the crypt stands any testing,  
the boy shall then be dead.

*The lions rise and pace back and forth on their chains.*

FIRST WATCHMAN (*without moving*)

Brother, are you awake?

SECOND WATCHMAN (*without moving*)

I hear you.

FIRST WATCHMAN

Are we alone?

SECOND WATCHMAN

Who knows?

FIRST WATCHMAN

Is it daylight?

*The Magic Flute*

SECOND WATCHMAN

Perhaps, yes.

FIRST WATCHMAN

Is night falling?

SECOND WATCHMAN

There it is.

FIRST WATCHMAN

The time passes.

SECOND WATCHMAN

But how?

FIRST WATCHMAN

No doubt, the hour strikes.

SECOND WATCHMAN

For us, never.

THE TWO OF THEM

You people above us,

your exertions are vain.

Goals evade man, they flee him  
and his ever-changing aim.

He tugs and tears life's secret veil  
'twixt day and night to no avail.

In vain, he seeks the sky for room;  
in vain, he plumbs the deepest tomb,  
and still the air retains its gloom.

Then the vault grows bright  
and alternates the night  
with brilliance swift in flight.

He makes his way down,

He presses ahead.

He stumbles and strays  
into madness misled.

*The rear curtain opens. Decor of water and fire as in The Magic*

## *The Magic Flute*

Flute. Left, the fire, an elevated mound. Above, the waters, a rocky pass, but without a temple. The entire decor must be arranged in such a way that it looks as if fire and water are the only entrances to the cavern.

### TAMINO and PAMINA

*They descend the rock with torches and sing as they climb down.*

### TAMINO

My beloved, my precious,  
O how can we rescue our son;  
'twixt the water and the flames,  
past the monster no one tames,  
rests our treasured saving grace.

*They go through the fire.*

### PAMINA

For your consort, for a mother  
who is running to her youngster,  
the water and the flames,  
the monster no one tames,  
and the guard all make a place.

*A cloud descends and floats into the center between water and fire.  
The cloud opens.*

### THE QUEEN OF THE NIGHT

What has happened!  
Through the water, through the flame,  
pressing luck in their bold mission,  
up, you guards and beasts untame,  
set yourselves in opposition  
and protect this precious grace.

### THE WATCHMEN

*They point their spears at the casket. The lions follow them closely in attention. The arrangements on both sides should be symmetrical.*

## *The Magic Flute*

We are watching, we guard the path  
with spears and lion's wrath,  
O Goddess, we guard your grace.

TAMINO and PAMINA (*emerging into view*)  
O my husband, my beloved,  
my precious, my desire,  
see, the water, see, the fire  
makes for mother's love a place.  
You watchmen, have forbearance.

QUEEN

You watchmen, no forbearance!  
Stand firmly in your place!

TAMINO and PAMINA

O woe! woe us poor parents!  
Who'll save our saving grace?

QUEEN

They're storming the guarded path,  
let the venging lion's wrath  
devour their precious grace!

*The cloud floats away. Silence.*

THE CHILD (*in the casket*)

The voice of the father,  
the mother's dear sound  
is heard by the youngster  
with eyes big and round.

PAMINA and TAMINO

O happiness, the first of notes.  
We hear the lulling of our boy!  
Don't let the magic bedazzle our joy.  
You Gods! What blissfulness  
blesses us both.  
O let us hear once more our boy,  
that sweetest note.

*The Magic Flute*

CHORUS (*hidden*)

Be quiet! The lad here  
is no longer dozing.  
The lions and spears  
no longer opposing.  
The cavernous snare  
can't hold him inside;  
he's pressing for air  
with a spirited stride.

*The lid of the sarcophagus springs open. A GENIUS climbs out, who is completely illuminated by the lights which had made the crypt transparent. The lights must be arranged so that the upper half of the remaining figures are also luminous. The watchmen and lions suddenly enter. Tamino and Pamina withdraw.*

GENIUS

I'm here now, you loved ones!  
and aren't I a joy?  
Who could be saddened  
to gaze at his boy?  
Conceived during midnight  
in the lordliest bed,  
then lost to all sight  
into nights filled with dread.  
The pointed spears threaten,  
the vengeance is seething,  
the army din deafens  
with dragons, fire-breathing.  
Yet all of these dangers  
are nothing to me.

*The instant the watchmen run at him with their spears, he flies away.*

END OF FRAGMENT